4/23/69

Dear Phil,

More than the usual mail today and I'm getting farthur behind so I'll be brief in my thanks for the valuable clippings and with the explanations.

I am particularly anxious to have references to the public statements by Commission counsel. Ball - love. I unload on him in COUP because he was a sneak, hitting at me from an audience denied me and running for cover when I call him. He claimed he was misquoted but would not write such a letter to the NY Times. But the unloading was warranted.

"L'Amerique Brule" is the French title of "Farewell America". It is an elaborate, pseudo-scholarly put on that I think has CIA antecedents. I do not have unequivocal proof, hence I am interested in every shred. It may have been designed to effect a mistrial in N.O., for no one could expect the bankruptcy of what was offered in evidence there. If this was its intent, I was, by accident, at the right place and the right time and blew it. It has not been heard from in this country since. The unnamed rich oilman is H.L. Hunt and that part is fictitious. It is not worth spending money on unless we can get a different edition than that available in the US through a Canadian front. It was printed (English edition) in Belgium.

James Hepburn (J'aime Hepburn - Audrey) is the nom de plume of one Herve Lamarre. But this was a committee job. He presumeable was the chief. He is the chief publicist, etc. He says he took the name because he carries a torch for the actress.

Now, my suspicions: one of the people helping him is described as "Philippe". All have and claim to have had intelligence connections. There was one Philippe Thraud de Vosjoly who had been chief of French intelligence in the U.S. and simultaneously, I think, CIA. He is the central character in Topaz, where he is called Andre Devereaux. I have other things I cannot here go into. There was a LIFE story on deV that I asked some students to get for me. They located it more than six weeks ago and I do not have it yet. That issue carried several unclear pictures of him, which I need very much. There was also a New York Times story after Topaz came out on deV. If you ever bump into either, I'd like a copy very much. It may help track this down, for I know several people who met "Philippe". It would be very good to know if he is Philippe deV.

Your area of research interest largely coincides with one of my temporarily-suppressed writings, TIGER TO RIDE: THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS. I have had it researched for three years but just cannot get to it. I have no special knowledge of the Baghdad Pact. However, I have a friend who did his doctorate thesis on the part played by US labor organizations in foreign policy. At some time your interest and his may coincide. He is going to teach after this semester at Washington, in St. Louis. He is now at Vermont.
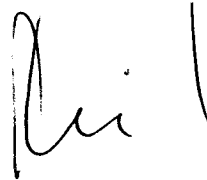
Againm thanks.

Best,

Dear Hal,

Thanks for your note of the 1st--yes, I'd like very much to borrow a copy of COUP when you have it. I'll of course take care of the cost of mailing.

Page proofs for Steppen. 3 now corrected and returned to London, should be completed and back here (providing no further labor troubles at the docks) in early June. Now have more time to spend on research in an area that might surprise you: U.S. Diplomatic History. Specifically, origins of the Baghdad Pact. The subject (diplomatic history) an early passion of mine, not pursued since undergraduate days.

A couple of clips enclosed. I did not hear Ball speak because I had no idea he was to be here. But curious thing is that, according to this news clip, he's originally from here--a resident of Council Bluffs at one time & a grad of Creighton, here in Omaha. As I've said to you before, the extraordinary number of persons relating in some way or other to the assassination who have some sort of ties with this geographical area.... It's at least strange.

This "review" of AMERICA BURNS is inane, but thought you'd like to have it if you hadn't already seen it. I may query Blackwell's--they might be able to find me a copy of the English edition (or I might try the publisher, in Vaduz). So who is James Hepburn?

More later--